

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 35519 01 OF 02 011805Z

43

ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

PM-03 DODE-00 SP-02 TRSY-01 EB-03 /042 W

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R 011753Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7547

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY LISBON

USMISSION NATO

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 35519

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, FR, UR

SUBJECT: MITTERRAND LUNCH AT SOVIET EMBASSY

1. A PS NATIONAL SECRETARY HAS GIVEN US INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF MITTERRAND'S LUNCH WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR TCHERVENKO WHICH TOOK PLACE ABOUT THREE WEEKS AGO.

2. ESSENTIALLY SOVIETS WERE INTERESTED IN THREE QUESTIONS:

-- HOW PS ASSESSED IMPLICATIONS OF CHIRAC'S DRIVE FOR PRIMACY IN THE MAJORITY AND WHETHER EARLY ELECTIONS WERE THEREFORE LIKELY;

-- WHETHER THE PS WOULD BE PREPARED TO ASSUME POWER WITHOUT THE PCF; AND

-- HOW THE PS ASSESSED THE PCF'S OPPOSITION TO A

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PAGE 02 PARIS 35519 01 OF 02 011805Z

DIRECTLY ELECTED EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT; AND THE PROSPECTS

OF THAT PARLIAMENT.

3. MITTERRAND REPLIED TO FIRST QUESTION THAT CHIRAC, WHO REPRESENTED THE "BONAPARTIST" TRADITION IN FRANCE AS AGAINST GISCARD'S GENTLER "ORLEANISM", COULD BRING ABOUT A RUPTURE IN THE MAJORITY, IF HIS CURRENT INITIATIVES CONTINUE TO PICK UP SUPPORT, WHICH COULD LEAD TO EARLIER LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS THAN PRESENTLY ANTICIPATED. (COMMENT: OUR SOURCE'S ACCOUNT LEFT UNCLEAR WHETHER TCHERVONENKO WAS PRIMARILY INTENT ON VERIFYING THE SOVIET ANALYSIS OF THE FRENCH DOMESTIC SCENE, ON THE BASIS OF WHICH BREZHNEV'S VISIT WAS APPARENTLY MOVED TO LATE SPRING OF 1977, OR WHETHER TCHERVONENKO QUESTION WAS AIMED ONLY AT THE FOREIGN POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH A DEVELOPMENT, WHICH WERE NOT DISCUSSED).

4. ON SECOND QUESTION, FRANCOIS MITTERRAND REPLIED THAT THE PS HAD EVERY INTENTION OF MAINTAINING ITS ALLIANCE WITH THE PCF, EVEN IN A SITUATION SUCH AS DESCRIBED PARA 3; ALTHOUGH, WE GATHER, AN INFERENCE WAS LEFT THAT, IN CONTEXT OF EARLY ELECTIONS CAUSED BY A MAJORITY CRISIS, THE POSSIBILITY COULD NOT BE RULED OUT COMPLETELY OF CRACKS OR EVEN A SPLIT BETWEEN PS AND PCF. (SOURCE ELABORATED THAT ONE SUCH SCENARIO WOULD BE A 51 PERCENT VOTE FOR THE LEFT, BUT WITHOUT A RESULTING LEFT MAJORITY IN THE PARLIAMENT. IN SUCH A SITUATION, THE PS MIGHT BE SORELTY TEMPTED BY AN OFFER TO GOVERN WITHOUT THE PCF, AND PERHAPS WITHOUT OTHER SUPPORT; BUT EVEN THIS POSSIBILITY MITTERRAND FOUND MOST UNLIKELY.) SOURCE SAID HE WAS STRUCK BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S APPARENT TOTAL INDIFERENCE TO PCF'S FATE IN ANY SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES. HE FOCUSED ONLY ON IMPLICATIONS SUCH A SITUATION WOULD

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PAGE 01 PARIS 35519 02 OF 02 011810Z

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 35519

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HAVE FOR FRANCO-SOVIET STATE RELATIONS.

5. AS TO EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, MITTERRAND SAID THE PCF HAD ALSO OPPOSED THE 1972 POMPIDOU REFERENDUM ON UK ENTRY, TO WHICH IT LATER ADJUSTED. MITTERRAND THOUGHT THEREFORE THAT, HAVING MADE ITS POINT, THE PCF WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY PRESENT CANDIDATES FOR SEATS IN STRASBOURG ALONG WITH EVERYBODY ELSE, AFTER THE DIRECT ELECTION ISSUE IS APPROVED IN FRANCE AND ELSEWHERE. MITTERRAND ALSO USED OPPORTUNITY TO NOTE PS COMMITMENT TO EC INSTITUTIONS AND TO "EUROPEAN" EVOLUTION. TCHERVONENKO LISTENED CAREFULLY BUT MADE NO REPLY.

6. COMMENT: WE GATHER FROM OTHER MORE SENSITIVE SOURCES (PROTECT VERY CAREFULLY) THAT INTERNAL DISCUSSION MAY BE GOING ON IN SOVIET EMBASSY HERE AS TO WHETHER IT SHOULD TRY TO INVOLVE MOSCOW IN MORE ACTIVE CAMPAIGN AGAINST EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. AS REGARDS PS ASSESSMENT, CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 PARIS 35519 02 OF 02 011810Z

SOURCE CONSIDERED IT ILLUSTRATION OF PS/PCF SOLIDARITY THAT, EVEN THOUGH THE TWO PARTIES TOOK DIFFERENT POSITIONS ON THE REFERENDUM (PCF AGAINST AND PS ABSTENTION), THE ISSUE DID NOT AFFECT THE UNION OF THE LEFT. MAR-CHAINS HAD IN FACT CALLED MITTERRAND THE DAY FOLLOWING PS ANNOUNCEMENT ITS POSITION TO SET UP THEIR NEXT FACE-TO-FACE MEETING. SUCH WOULD MOST LIKELY BE THE CASE AGAIN ON THE EC PARLIAMENT ISSUE.

7. INTERESTINGLY SOVIETS ASKED NO QUESTIONS ABOUT PS INTENTIONS ON SPECIFIC INTERNATIONAL ISSUES SUCH AS DISARMAMENT. OUR SOURCE CONCLUDED THAT LUNCH AMOUNTED TO TWO ONE-WAY MONOLOGUES (AIDED BY TRANSLATION FACTOR) MORE THAN A PRODUCTIVE DIALOGUE, ALTHOUGH IT THREW CUR-

RENT SOVIET INTERESTS INTO EVEN CLEARER RELIEF.

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